THE PRAXIS OF CODE-SWITCHING: LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FILIPINO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS USING LINGUA FRANCA
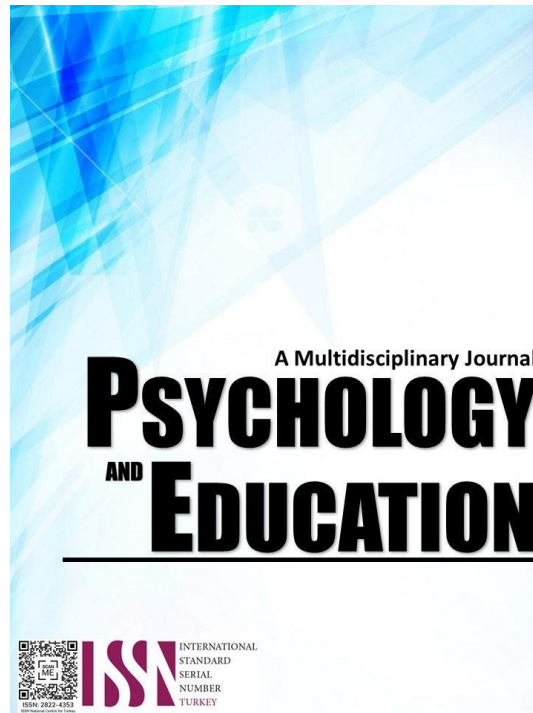
The Praxis of Code-Switching: Lived Experiences of Filipino Senior High School Learners Using Lingua Franca

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Abstract

Code-switching, particularly the use of Taglish as a lingua franca, is a prevalent linguistic practice among Filipino Senior High School learners. With this, it aimed to explore their lived experiences in using code-switching within classroom interactions, focusing on its impact on communication, learning, and social relationships. Using Fairclough's Socio-Cultural Approach and Communication Accommodation Theory, the study employed a qualitative phenomenological design, following Colaizzi's Methodological Framework. Four Senior High School learners from one of the private schools in Bocaue, Bulacan, participated in in-depth interviews, with responses categorized into five emergent themes: Determining Linguistic Adaptability Using Filipino, English and Taglish in Classroom Setting, Utilizing Taglish as a spoken language in the Context of personal awareness, Developing an Enhanced Relationship through Filipino, and English, and Mixed Language, Evaluating the Role of Language in Fostering Social Bonding, and Recognizing the Emotional Impact of Using Filipino as a Preferred Language. The findings suggested that learners used code-switching for clarity, convenience, and expression, significantly influencing their self-confidence, peer interactions, and academic engagement. It facilitated comprehension, allowing them to navigate both formal and informal discourse effectively. The study recommended that educators acknowledge the role of code-switching in fostering inclusive and meaningful learning experiences. The school may develop language policies that recognize its practicality while ensuring balanced proficiency in both Filipino and English. Fairclough's Socio-Cultural Approach analyzed cultural backgrounds and communication mediums, while the Communicative Accommodation Theory examined language and style adjustments based on situational contexts and interpersonal interactions.

Keywords: *code switching, taglish, lingua franca, senior high school learners, fairclough's socio-cultural approach*

Introduction

Taglish is a common language shared by people in the Philippines, it is a combination of two languages both Tagalog and English and is primarily spoken most in the classroom set-up by learners (Lesada, 2017). In line with this, it served as a lingua franca for Filipino senior high school learners who commonly code-switch their language used because this behavior aligns with current linguistic patterns in multilingual communities. Learners often used code-switching to alternate between multiple languages during classroom discussions which now defines the way learners conduct their educational interactions. Bacutan & Costales (2023) reported that learners used code-switching because it lets them bridge language gaps for better comprehension and strengthen peer relationships. The way learners selected their languages in specific instructional situations demonstrates their reaction to how classrooms operate today. Understanding the functional role of Taglish in learner's communication at schools remains essential because it determines how we should tackle language proficiency and teaching approaches. As learners explored different multilingual environments, Taglish serves as a bridge that facilitates comprehension and engagement specifically to more complex academic discussions.

Unfortunately, there is a lack of particular studies on the long-term effects of Taglish on senior high school learners' language proficiency in both English and Filipino. According to Enriquez et al. (2022), code-switching is a natural behavior of ESL learners; nevertheless, further study is necessary to determine how Taglish usage affects learners' capacity to become fully proficient in both English and Filipino. Academic use of Taglish stands as a potential barrier to mastering either English or Filipino proficiency but existing data is insufficient to determine its complete educational effects on learners' abilities. It is encouraged that more research should be conducted on how Taglish impacts educational performance and language competence of learners including their linguistic fluency when both English and Filipino are necessary in academic contexts. Moreover, the use of Taglish language inside the classroom set-up has an impact on the learners' ability to think critically.

Language plays a vital role in shaping the thought processes of learners' in conveying their idea and if frequent use of code-switching may influence how they analyze, reason and articulate ideas in academic fields. Thus, the question still remains whether the use of Taglish can influence or limit a learner's ability to think critically when using both Filipino and English language. In addition, Aquino (2022) revealed that there's no significant difference in learners' attitudes about code-switching, there is still uncertainty over whether regular Taglish usage has an impact on learners' capacity to write well in circumstances that are either exclusively in English or Filipino. As other studies examine these relationships, educational establishments would need to reevaluate language policies that strike a balance between the pursuit of language proficiency and linguistic diversity.

The main goal of this study is to explore the lived experiences of Senior High School learners' use of Taglish language as a lingua franca. It aims to examine their personal experience, and how this influences the learners' communication and learning process in

classroom set-up. Roxas (2019) indicated that Senior High School learners used code-switching because of their academic background together with social development and cognitive processing ability that functions to express themselves and 8 fill missing vocabulary. Thus, this research investigated both the ways Taglish controls learner-to-learner communication and its influence on language mastery levels and educational teaching methods. This study aims into the influence of code-switching to learners' that enhances our understanding about bilingual education and learners' language and academic advancement.

This study added to the current understanding of bilingualism and code-switching by examining how Taglish operates as the prevailing language utilized by Filipino Senior High School learners. As Abdon & Barrios (2024) emphasized, Tagalog language impact on English acquisition and grammatical standards as this work examines the dual advantages Taglish offers to learners in their social and intellectual growth. The study probed Taglish usage patterns for learners' insight into bilingual language navigation which explains their speech elements and advance their academic progress and linguistic development. Outcomes enable educators together to establish language teaching methods which replicate the authentic bilingual interaction styles that learners experience within school settings.

Research Questions

This study aims to explore and dissect the practice of using Taglish among Senior High School learners for the school year 2024-2025 in one private school in Bocaue Bulacan. Specifically, this research ought to answer to the following questions:

1. What is the language preference that Filipino Senior High School learners use in their experiences when it comes to communication as part of their daily conversation?
2. How do Filipino Senior High School learners describe their perspectives of language appropriateness in communication and the ways in which these perceptions influence their social relationships and self-expressions?
3. How do Filipino Senior High School learners describe their emotional and social experiences when mixing languages in classroom interactions?

Methodology

Research Design

This research employed a qualitative research design that explored the praxis of Taglish as a language that is used by Filipino high school learners in one of the private schools in Bocaue, Bulacan. Moreover, this chapter presented the content of the methods used in this study including the research design, participants and instruments of the study, data gathering procedures and analysis, and the ethical considerations. This study used the phenomenological research design. A Phenomenological research design focused on the experiences of the participants; the researchers aimed to examine how these experiences contributed to the development of this study. In data collection, this method is applicable when human experience is being involved, without modification, the pieces of information gathered must be based solely on the participants direct experience (Yee, 2019). This method contributed to the analysis of the relationship of the human experiences and how it is being applied in their daily lives, it expounds the available details from the data that the researchers have gathered, it featured the essence of qualitative research in which to give an emphasis on the explanation of a study (Creswell, 2018).

The researchers conducted a qualitative study with Colaizzi Phenomenological research design. It allowed the researchers to gather information from the learners of senior high school as participants, specifically the focus interview, in order to have concrete information directly from the participants. It allowed the researchers to come up with findings from the transcripts that were by a repetitive reading process in order to obtain the general aims of the study, from the acknowledged data, the significant information that are related will be extracted from the transcripts that directly supported the research questions of this study as well as the organization of the data from the central idea of each participant. The researchers' integration of the findings are from the thorough analysis of the data gathered through continuously investigating the audio of the interview transcripts from the participants (Praveena, 2022).

Participants

The participants are one of the most important variables to complete the process of this study. With this, the researchers chose four (4) Senior High School learners from one private school in Bocaue, Bulacan to interview in this study. The participants contributed to this study through sharing their own personal experiences in code-switching. To support the validity of the study, the researchers used the purposive sampling. This is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002).

In simple words, the participants are chosen "on purpose." Purposeful Sampling technique has many different types and for this study, the researchers used the Criterion Sampling (Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria) which chooses different participants that meet a specific criterion. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria are used to determine which members of the target population who can or cannot participate in a research study.

This study sought to include the Senior High School learners age ranges from 16 to 18 years old and is actively enrolled in an institution in Bocaue, Bulacan in this School Year 2024-2025. Also, Senior High School learners were involved in this study if they can communicate either in English or Tagalog language and if they were to participate in this study (Capungcol et al., 2024). However,

there are some factors that are considered for the participants to be excluded in this study. If the learners are under or over age from the given age range in inclusion criteria they will be excluded. Additionally, those who are a Senior High School learner but have dual citizenship and those who refuse to be part of this study will be excluded.

Instrument

The use of focused interviews in this study is to gather data from a small number of people in moderated settings. This method aimed to collect data about the interviewee's own experience. The research questions that the researchers used are open-ended questions and self-made questions. This study implemented the use of an audio recorded Interview that will be transcribed and analyzed using a content analysis approach (Cohen et al., 2007).

The focused interview aided by the self-developed Interview Protocol Guide, helped the researchers to gather data using the thirteen item questions for the participants who were randomly chosen from Senior High School level. Also, in this study, the researchers implemented the use of method triangulation that uses writing logs from the participants in order to balance the truthful basis from the interview transcription and their actual experiences that were written in the log for four days (Dawson et al., 2021).

Data Analysis

The data analysis of this study is employed as a thematic process and thematic analysis to examine participants' experiences. Through the thematic process, the study systematically coded interview data, identified patterns, and categorized emerging themes. Using thematic analysis, the research interpreted these themes to gain a deeper understanding of how Taglish functions as a lingua franca among senior high school students. This structured approach provided insight into the complexities of language use and its impact on communication (Atlas.ti, 2024). Using the data from the interview, the researchers assessed the reason of the learners in using Taglish in daily conversation, which language is more preferred and more convenient. Moreover, it unveiled the evolving linguistic practices among senior high school learners and the understanding of their lingua franca. Additionally, the study contributed to discussions on language preservation and development, helping to shape educational strategies that recognize and respect learners' linguistic preferences while ensuring effective learning.

Ethical Considerations

In this study, the protection and the rights of the participants is the utmost priority of the researcher. The researcher will ensure that the dignity and well-being of the participants will be maintained at all times. Furthermore, in this study, the researcher ensured and followed all ethical practices in this research. This study also provides informed consent for the participants. The participants will be guaranteed that whatever information they will be sharing will be safeguarded and kept in private and confidential. This study will guarantee to adhere to and observe compliance under the Data Privacy Act of 2012 Law.

Results and Discussion

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the following are the themes and sub-themes identified from the narratives of the participants. Guided by Fairclough's Socio-Cultural Approach and Communication Accommodation Theory, the researchers employed a qualitative phenomenological analysis using Colaizzi's Methodological Framework. These theoretical and methodological lenses allowed for an in-depth exploration of the learners lived experiences, emphasizing how language use—particularly code-switching between Filipino, English, and Taglish—functions within social, emotional, and academic contexts.

The analysis yielded five major themes, each representing key aspects of the learners' communication practices and identity negotiation through code-switching. Each theme is supported by sub-themes that reflect the specific ways language is chosen, adapted, and perceived in various interactions. The summary of these themes are presented in the table below

Table 1. *Summary of Themes and Sub-themes*

Theme	Sub-theme
Determining Linguistic Adaptability Using Filipino, English, and Taglish in Classroom Setting	- Language Used for Communication in School - Situation-Based Language Preference - Mixed-Language in Communicative Context
Utilizing Taglish as a Spoken Language in the Context of Personal Awareness	- Mindful Communication - Interpersonal Connections - Miscommunication Caused by Unclear Language Usage
Developing an Enhanced Relationship through Filipino, and English, and Mixed Language	- Choice of Language as an Influence to Relationship - Code-Switching as Communication Strategy
Evaluating the Role of Language in Fostering Social Bonding	- Enhanced Interaction Through Language Preference - Language Effectivity in Preserving Connection
Recognizing the Emotional Impact of Using Filipino as a Preferred Language	- Support on Convenient Language Usage - Emotional State in Using Language on a Given Context

The following are the results of the participants' response in the data gathering the researchers conducted:

Theme 1. Determining Linguistic Adaptability Using Filipino, English and Taglish in Classroom Setting

This theme presented that the language choice of the participants is determined by the situation and to the person surrounding them.

Sub-Theme 1. Language Preference in School Context. The Filipino Senior High School learners used Tagalog and Filipino in communicating in casual conversation inside the school. The reason is the participants are comfortable using Filipino language and it is their native language. They use English inside the classroom if their subject uses English and requires it. While, some of the participants used taglish in communication inside the school.

Sub-Theme 2. Situation-Based Language Preference. The participants use language based on their situation and based on the person they are talking to. Some participants use English in school activities. While some participants said that it depends on the required language of the subject.

Sub-Theme 3. Use of Code-Switching for Better Communication. The Filipino Senior High School learners used mixed-language in communicating with others. They use Filipino or Tagalog in casual talk while English in school and participants use Taglish if they prefer. Some prefer to use Taglish when they do not know the word in one language, so they use the translation they are familiar with and the participants use Taglish because they are comfortable.

Theme 2. Utilizing Taglish as a spoken language in the Context of personal awareness

This theme showed that the participants expressed their thoughts and mindfulness in communicating with their language choice in associating with others.

Sub-Theme 1. Mindful Communication. The participants prefer to use Taglish in daily conversation such as communicating with their peers and their family. It is better to use Taglish because they can express themselves and they use Taglish when they forgot the word in one language, so they use the translation of another language that they are familiar with.

Sub-Theme 2. Appropriate Language Preference Depending on the Context of Communication. The participants use the right language in a situation such as Tagalog because we are in the Philippines, so they prefer using the native language of their country.

Sub-Theme 3. Miscommunication Caused by Unclear Language Usage. *The* Filipino Senior High School learners often have misunderstandings due to the use of unclear language particularly when someone uses complex words in both languages, While, some of the participants used taglish in communication inside the school.

Theme 3. Developing an Enhanced Relationship through Filipino, and English, and Mixed Language

In this theme, it demonstrated that participants used specific language particularly in Filipino and English in interactions with other people.

Sub-Theme 1. Choice of Language as an Influence on Relationships. The learners preferred Tagalog when communicating to their peers. The reason is this language can help them connect with their peers. Also, the participants would rather use the Filipino language because the majority of the Filipino citizens use it.

Sub-theme 2. Code-Switching as Communication Strategy. The participants used Code-switching, specifically Tagalog and English. As stated by some participants it is important to choose a specific language to communicate effectively with others.

Theme 4. Evaluating the Role of Language in Fostering Social Bonding

This theme showed the effectiveness of how language is used in building and strengthening social bonding with peers, classmates, etc.

Sub-Theme 1. Enhanced Interaction Through Language Preference. The participants choose the language they use depending on the person they are talking to. It is important if the language choice of the participants can understand the person they are interacting with. So that language preference can enhance interaction between the senior high school learners.

Sub-Theme 2. Language Effectivity in Preserving Connection. Some Filipino Senior High School learners felt uneasy while using Taglish but some participants agreed that language choice can affect the person they are talking to. Some participants preferred using Filipino because this is the language that they are fluent in but it depends on the person they are talking to.

Theme 5. Recognizing the Emotional Impact of Using Filipino as a Preferred Language

This theme presented the preferred language that contributes in utilizing emotion and well-being in daily interaction.

Sub-Theme 1. Understanding One Another through the use of Language Recognized by All. *For* Filipino Senior High School learners, it is effective to use the Filipino language because Filipino citizens are fluent in this language and we can understand each other.

Sub-Theme 2. Emotional State in Using Language in a Given Context. The participants are using Tagalog in school and outside the

school while communicating because they are comfortable in using their language choice. Some adjusted their language choice because of the people they are talking to.

Conclusions

In light of the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn. The use of code-switching plays an integral role in the lives of Senior High School learners wherein language preference is a factor in their daily use of communication. The study revealed that the lingua franca of the participants is Taglish. The overall findings of the study are anchored in Fairclough's Sociocultural Theory, where the lived experiences of the participants determined the lingua franca and how it shaped social relationships and personal preferences, showing how languages connect people as strategies are implemented for better communication results among different native speakers. The key themes that the researchers have condensed showed that situations, academic engagement, and emotion support the language preference of the learners according to their lingua franca. The learners tend to use Tagalog or Filipino for comfort and as an advantage due to familiarity and mastery. However, it was clear that the adjustability of language choice depends on the situational-based context, which explains the concept of how lingua franca is applied. The language preference of the Senior High School learners is Taglish. It is evident that in every situation, they are applying the mixed-language to achieve successful communication.

Based on the learners' narratives, using one language solely does not relatively affect casual conversation. However, from the data gathered, the participants lack awareness that code-switching is being applied, especially to avoid misleading information. In terms of language preference, the learners are engaged in using the language they are accustomed to, yet mix languages to develop enhanced communication. From the context of perspectives, communication strategies depend on the person they are talking to. This influences the choice of language in terms of appropriateness, leading learners to achieve self-expression. In order to comprehend the content of the conversation, they analyze the situation and express themselves in a manner that may result in effective communication. For some, using Taglish is essential for the betterment of communication and to avoid misleading information due to inappropriate language terminologies, especially for words that lack direct translation in either English or Tagalog.

It is evident in the narratives that language primarily affects how interaction is developed among others, especially when talking with peers and participating in school activities, such as recitation in English class. This finding supports the study's reference to Communication Accommodation Theory, which discusses how learners use strategies and styles to create better communication among people. The first language of a learner directly affects their communication, especially when they face challenges with different languages among those around them. Therefore, code-switching is not merely a linguistic strategy but also supports learners in becoming socially acceptable, especially within their generation. It showed that Taglish is a shared language among the Senior High School learners in one private school in Bocaue, Bulacan.

In view of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby offered. It is recommended that future studies further explore the lived experiences of Filipino Senior High School learners using code-switching, focusing on how it shapes their identity, self-expression, and confidence in communication. Similar studies should be conducted to examine the relationship between code-switching and emotional comfort, particularly in students transitioning to new academic environments. Further research should investigate how code-switching influences language proficiency in both Filipino and English, considering its frequent use in casual and academic settings. Studies should assess the impact of code-switching on students' self-expression and confidence, particularly in classroom discussions and peer interactions. The study can be expanded or replicated to include the perspectives of educators, parents, and peers to gain a holistic understanding of how code-switching impacts interpersonal relationships and learning experiences.

Educational institutions are encouraged to recognize code-switching as an integral part of students lived experiences and consider it in language policy development to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. Teachers should be trained to leverage code-switching as a pedagogical tool to enhance student engagement and understanding while maintaining language proficiency in both Filipino and English. School administrators should develop language policies that recognize the practicality of code-switching in social and academic settings, ensuring it is used purposefully rather than due to linguistic limitations. Classroom activities should be designed to encourage flexible language use, allowing students to express themselves confidently while also strengthening their proficiency in both Filipino and English. Further emphasis should be placed on the role of language preference in building social relationships, ensuring that students feel comfortable using their preferred language while maintaining mutual understanding with their peers and teachers.

Future studies can apply Fairclough's Sociocultural Theory to examine the role of code-switching in shaping learners' experiences, social relationships, and identity in both peer and classroom settings. A study using Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) is also recommended to explore how teachers and learners adjust their language use through code-switching and its impact on engagement, comprehension, and interaction. Replicating Colaizzi's method, future research can further investigate how code-switching contributes to learners' identity formation, self-expression, and confidence in academic and social settings. Lastly, the findings of this study should be considered in the development and implementation of the proposed Translanguaging subject in the Senior High School curriculum, to better support multilingual practices and enhance learner engagement.

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